



## East Norriton PCE Site Assessment Montgomery County, Pennsylvania – Information Meeting Summary –



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY - REGION 3

FEBRUARY 11, 2005

### Meeting Summary...

On February 2, 2005, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) met with residents of the Rahway Avenue area to update them on the progress of the investigation concerning contaminated wells in the area and to answer questions about the project. The meeting was a shared, team effort with EPA, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP), the Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry (ATSDR), the Montgomery County Health Department (MCHD), East Norriton Township and Norristown.

#### Meeting topics included:

- a time-line of events
- the status of the investigation
- the protective measures being taken currently
- the next steps
- the different capabilities of each agency

A condensed version of the time-line is as follows:

October 2004: MCHD well water sampling

November 2004: MCHD health advisory

December 2004: PADEP sampling

December 2004: EPA offer of assistance

December 2004: EPA involvement

January 2005 – present: PADEP additional sampling

Present – summer 2005: EPA will continue bottled water distribution and prepare for water line installation and hookups.

Our first priority is to protect public health and the environment, however we are also investigating potential sources and the extent of the contamination. The investigation will help answer questions such as:

- Who is responsible for the contamination?
- How long has the contamination been there?
- How far has it spread, or how deep down is the contamination?

Although finding the answers to these questions is important, our first priority is to protect public health for the short and long term. To accomplish this, we've set a list of priorities and goals, which include:

- Continue providing bottled water to residents with contaminated private wells. (by EPA)
- Inform the community of project updates and be available to answer questions (by team effort)
- Continue to collect samples from private wells that have not been tested (by PADEP)
- Collect additional samples to confirm data results that are at or near the 5 parts per billion (ppb) screening level (by PADEP and MCHD)
- Design and implement a permanent fix to the problem (by East Norriton Township, Norristown and EPA) and continue the investigation (by team effort)

## Long-Term Solution...

- East Norriton and Norristown will adopt an ordinance requiring residences with private wells in the Rahway Avenue area, to hook up to public water. (There are about 50 homes that will need to be hooked up.)
- Pennsylvania American Water will work with East Norriton Township and Norristown to provide main water line extensions, at no cost to the residents, within the time-frame of the ordinance.
- EPA will provide curbside-to-home hook-ups, at no cost to the residents, within the time-frame of the ordinance.
- EPA will also close up the private wells, so future residents do not unknowingly use the contaminated water. Another important reason the wells must be closed is because continued pumping could cause the contaminated water to spread.
- EPA will continue to provide bottled water to affected residences until the connection to public water is completed.

## Background...

As part of an immediate response to address PCE-related contamination found in residential wells, EPA has been distributing bottled water since December 2004, free of charge, to residents with potentially affected wells in the Rahway Avenue area of East Norriton Township. The contaminant of concern is perchloroethylene (PCE); also called tetrachloroethylene, and sometimes nicknamed “perc.” PCE is commonly used in degreasers and in dry cleaning.

### Getting Your Well Water Tested

If you have a private well and it has not been tested, please schedule an appointment with:

**Tim Cherry**  
**PADEP Project Manager**  
**Call (484) 250-5728**

## Water Uses...

### Bottled Water should be used for:

- drinking (doctors recommend drinking two liters of water a day as part of a healthy, balanced diet. For this daily intake, use the bottled water.)
- infant formula, powdered drinks, juices from concentrate, coffee and tea.

### Well Water can be used for:

- house cleaning
- laundry
- showers, baths and brushing teeth
- dish washing
- food rinsing
- cooking, if the water is not consumed

### **For More Information, Contact...**

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- Lynda Rebarchak, PADEP  
Community Relations Coordinator  
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- Rachel DeMarzio, MCHD  
Water Quality Supervisor  
(610) 278-5117, ext 6727
- Helmuth Baerwald  
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Township Manager  
(610) 275 - 2800, ext 114
- Thomas O'Donnell  
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